

# The Vault

MSOE Weekly Newsletter

Week 6, March 6, 2019

**Dr. Erik Johnson**, MSOE Program Director,  
Associate Professor of Music Education  
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Program Director

## BE THE BEST STUDENT FOR YOUR STUDENTS

Always strive to be the student you would want your students to be. It is very easy to fall into a trap and burn out, but when you put in the work and constantly remind yourself of what you are doing and who you are doing it for, the process is so much more rewarding. We also have to remember that in striving to be the best for your students, you are still learning! Have a wonderful time, because times like these pass by very fast! Take advantage of all of the opportunities presented to you, but most importantly, take care of yourselves first so that you can bring your best selves to the world, because the world needs you!

-Xareny Polanco, Viola Teaching Artist



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### MAKE THE MOST OF NONVERBALS

We should focus on acting the way we want our students to act during ensemble rehearsal. This means we should work on giving comments using nonverbal language. We should also make sure that we are not talking to other teaching artists while a conductor is on the podium

-Kaley Barnes, Low Brass Teaching Artist



*On a Personal Note...*

Something that we can continue to instill in ourselves and in our students is that music is an act of giving and receiving. This week I have been working with musicians at CSU to prepare for our symphonic band concert. Dr. Feagin is so great at constantly getting us to relate to the music "on a personal note" and pour ourselves into the work we do because the music we play is a gift to the listener and when we immerse ourselves in the work we do, it is a gift to us as well!

-Alex Salek,  
Clarinet Teaching



**QUOTE OF THE WEEK!**

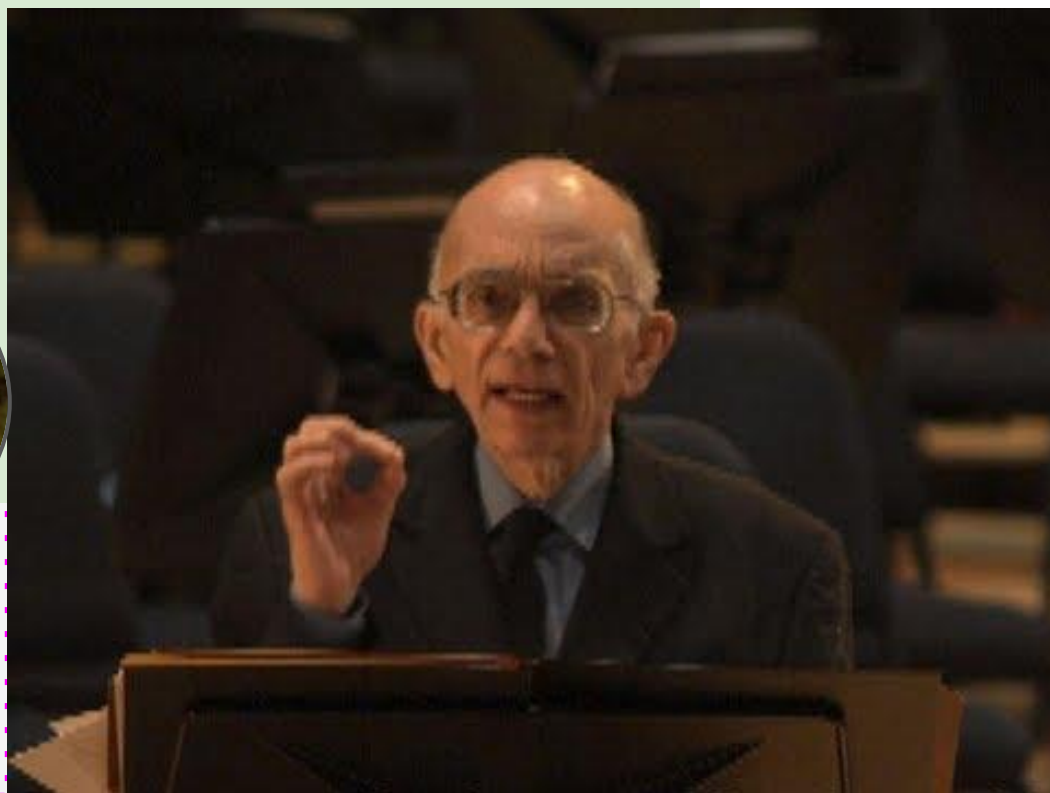
“ What's the worst that could happen? They'll tell you to practice more! ”

- Kaley Barnes

**SHOUT OUT!**

**Mr. Sam Russell**, Trombone and Euphonium high school teaching artist, has done an incredible job at giving the the trombones and euphoniums thoughtful and concise feedback that motivates them! My goal is to make comments as well as Mr. Russell does.

-Kaley Barnes



Artist

**EL SISTEMA**

I always watch this video to feel inspired. It never gets old! It is in Spanish, but there are subtitles!-Xareny Polanco

*Social Justice Connection*

During sectionals, instead of creating a story based on what I believe would go along with the music, I am giving students the chance to create a story of their own! Every week they are contributing to our ever-growing word bank for each piece and by the end of MSOE, I am going to create a Wordle!

-Xareny Polanco

## LESSON PLANS

In regards to creating my lesson plans, I recently started formatting them so that I follow the five step teaching cycle in each part of my lesson. By laying it out like this, I am able to see exactly how the students are going to learn the content I want them to learn. Along with this, I started putting time stamps next to each step. This made it easier for me during my lesson to be able to keep track of how much time I was spending on each activity.

*-Kaley Barnes*

## DEVELOP WELL-ROUNDED PLAYERS

Something that has not occurred to me until we applied it this year is the idea of rotating parts. The clarinets have been given multiple parts to give all of them the opportunity to play first and be an example for second and third parts. It was a struggle at the beginning and I now understand the importance of practicing movement like this to keep it clean in rehearsal and for concerts!

*-Alex Salek*

## BRING EXCELLENCE TO THE TABLE

One of the biggest things that I have learned this season in MSOE is to not allow your expectations of yourself to fall through the cracks. There will be periods of time where things just won't click between you and the students and in those moments we can let things go by that really need fixing without thinking about it. By lowering your expectations for them, you lower your expectations for yourself and becoming stagnant. As long as you continue to push yourself that will show in your students and you will grow TOGETHER! When you bring excellence to the table so do you. Don't let the tough weeks get you down use them as a stepping stone to raise your students to the next level!

*--Alex Salek*

## TEACHING TIPS!

**Xareny:** We should always remember that we are always better than we were the previous week as long as we can acknowledge our own growth.

**Kaley:** If you're feeling stressed about teaching and are questioning whether it is worth it or not, go listen to your favorite pieces of music! Remember where you came from and why you are here.

**Xareny:** If you find yourself talking too much but do find that a lot of what you are saying is important, have the students give input as well! They are completely capable of providing great insights and imaginative ideas!



- FROM THE YOUTUBES:**
- This is a song that helped me through a really tough time in music when I felt like I wasn't getting any better. It showed me that there is a Golden Palace for everyone. -Kaley Barnes

## “GREAT” IS NOT SO GREAT!

“Great” is not the greatest feedback tool! We have all been working really hard to give feedback that will drive the students forward and working to eliminate this phrase will help the students understand what they are doing “great” in a better way.

-Xareny Polanco

## SHOUT OUT!

I would like to give a shout out to Hollie, Casey and Sebastian for being so helpful this past week in the orchestra rehearsals! We only had two collegiate teachers and they really helped in supporting us and the students throughout the night!

-Xareny Polanco



In Symphonic Band, we performed a piece entitled *Of Our New Day Begun* by Omar Thomas, which was written for the victims of a church shooting in South Carolina in 2015. I felt extremely moved by this piece and in order to personally connect to it deeper, I drew this picture featuring some of the lyrics that we sing in the piece! -Kaley Barnes

The VAULT Presents....

# TEACHER'S TOOL BOX

A collection of all teaching knowledge gathered in the 2019 season, in six words or less (a work in progress)

Talk less, play more  
Sing it, finger, play it  
#MODELIT

Teach the person, not the [insert instrument here] player

Start at the bottom of the pyramid

Lead with a musical action

Students determine objectives

Students count off

Put students in charge

Concise Feedback

Share the objectives

Praise positive behavior

"Good" is not good enough feedback

Build on small successes

What can you communicate nonverbally?

Pass the "Angry Birds" test

No such thing as an "Arts Emergency"!

Learn (and steal!) from your teaching peers

Give more than you get

Use variety to maintain engagement

Give technique musical purpose

Help students create helpful habits

Wherever you put the bar, students will reach it!

Reflect on self, process, student impact

Provide the structure that students crave

## ...WHAT ELSE?

**Do YOU have a tip that belongs in the toolbox? Let us know!**

Email the editor at [casey.lawson@colostate.edu](mailto:casey.lawson@colostate.edu)

# MSOE MISSION STATEMENT:

**The purpose of CSU's Middle School Outreach Ensembles are to provide arts education that promotes a mindset of global citizenship and social justice through cultivating consciousness.**

*The MSOE Program is made possible by the generous support of private donors and Dr. Dan Goble, Director of the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance. We are so grateful for your support!*



## CONTACT US

Questions? Comments? Concerns?

Submissions? Send them to:  
[casey.lawson@colostate.edu](mailto:casey.lawson@colostate.edu)

### Letter from the Editor

Take a deep breath, teaching artists! We made it to the halfway point of the MSOE season! This is a perfect time to take a step back and reflect on everything the MSOE students have accomplished so far with your help. Do you remember what your section sounded like back in the first week? What has been going well so far, and what aspects of your teaching are you still focused on improving in the second half of the season? Are your students making personal connections with the music? Are YOU? I remember hearing recently (cough) that **teaching is a marathon, not a sprint**, so grab some gatorade and gummy bears (because that's everyone's favorite aide-station snack, right? Not just me? right?) and fuel up for the second half of the season!

-Casey Lawson, VAULT Editor

